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Environmental Bulletin

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from the Savannah River Site

ROD Issued for Ford Building Seepage Basin Operable Unit

The United States Department of Energy (DOE), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) have selected remedial approaches for Savannah River Site's (SRS) Ford Building Seepage Basin operable unit (FBSB OU). A 45-day public comment period for the Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan and the associated draft Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit modification was held from April 6, 2001 to May 20, 2001.

The remedial action is documented in the Record of Decision document. This document includes a responsiveness summary that addresses public comments. DOE has worked with SCDHEC and EPA to ensure the remedial approach is consistent with all applicable environmental requirements.

US DOE, the US EPA, and SCDHEC have determined that remedial action is necessary for this unit. The preferred remedial action is:

- 1.) the contaminated soil at the Tank/Process Sewer Line Area will be excavated and the soil will be dispositioned into the seepage basin; backfilling the remaining volume of the seepage basin and excavated area of the Tank/

Process Sewer Line Area with clean soil from an SRS borrow pit; covering the backfilled areas with vegetative covers; and institutional controls.

The seepage basin, which is defined by orange balls, is 120 by 78 ft. at ground level, approximately 60 by 25 ft. at the floor level, and approximately 10 ft. deep. The basin is fenced and marked with signs identifying it as a RCRA/CERCLA unit. Waste disposal records indicate that the basin received approximately 380,400 gal of wastewater from 1964 to 1984. During this period, the dominant radionuclide released was tritium with lesser amounts of cobalt-60, strontium-90, cesium-137, and unidentified alpha emitters. In addition to radionuclides, trace amounts of nonradioactive surfactants, and organic and inorganic constituents may have been released into the basin. There is no record that the basin ever overflowed.

The preferred alternative will be the final action for the FBSB. The Land Use Control Implementation Plan (LUCIP) will detail how SRS will implement, maintain, and monitor the land use control elements of the FBSB OU preferred alternative to ensure that the remedy remains protective of human health and the environment.

For More Information

Copies of the Record of Decision are available in the administrative record. The administrative record is available in the information repositories listed below:

- DOE Public Reading Room at the Gregg-Graniteville Library at the University of South Carolina-Aiken campus in Aiken, SC; and
- Thomas Cooper Library Government Documents Department at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC.

Hard copies of the Record of Decision are available at the following:

- Reese Library at Augusta State University in Augusta, GA; and

- Asa H. Gordon Library at Savannah State University in Savannah, GA.

For additional information contact:

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NEPA Values Impact Assessment for the Remediation of the TNX-Area Operable Unit at the Savannah River Site

DOE-SR is preparing a NEPA values impact assessment (VIA) that will accompany the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) review of alternatives for remediation of the TNX-Area Operable Unit (OU) at SRS. DOE-SR needs to determine the appropriate action to remediate the impacts of contaminants in the TNX Area on the environment. Agency guidance directs that DOE will incorporate NEPA values, such as analysis of cumulative, offsite, ecological, and socioeconomic impacts, to the extent practicable, in DOE documents prepared under CERCLA. The NEPA VIA was prepared in accordance with *Savannah River Site NEPA/CERCLA Integration Guidance* (WSRC-RP-97-232). It will be included as a reference in the TNX Area OU CERCLA documentation and will be submitted concurrently for public review and comment with the

CERCLA "Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan" because CERCLA is the regulatory driver for remedial action. NEPA values will, therefore, be incorporated into the CERCLA process for the TNX-Area OU remedial action.

If you would like a copy of the final VIA (DOE/VIA-0002) when it becomes available, please contact:

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SRS Receives Notice of Intent from EPA to Approve Delisting for the Vitrified M Area Plating Line Waste

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to grant a delisting petition submitted by the United States Department of Energy-Savannah River Operations Office (DOE-SR) to exclude (or "delist") certain hazardous wastes under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). DOE-SR generated the petitioned waste by treating wastes from M Area of the Savannah River Site (SRS), where nuclear reactor components were produced.

The petitioned waste meets the definitions of listed RCRA hazardous wastes F006 and F028. DOE-SR petitioned the EPA to grant a one-time generator specific delisting for its F006 and F028 waste, because DOE-SR believes that the waste does not meet the criteria for which these types of wastes were listed. The waste is a radioactive mixed waste (RMW) because it is both hazardous and radioactive. The M Area waste was treated by vitrification and meets land disposal restrictions (LDR) treatment standards for all hazardous constituents.

EPA reviewed all of the waste-specific information provided by DOE-SR, performed calculations and determined that the waste, which has low-level radioactivity, could be disposed in a landfill without harming human health and the environment. The March 15, 2002, *Federal Register* announcement proposes to grant the petition to delist the F006 and F028 waste and requests public comment on the proposed deci-

sion. The 45-day public comment period ends April 29, 2002. If the proposed delisting becomes a final delisting, DOE-SR's petitioned waste will no longer be classified as F006 and F028, and will not be subject to RCRA. The waste will still be subject to the Atomic Energy Act and local, State and Federal regulations for low-level radioactive wastes.

Any questions or comments may be directed to Dr. Judy Sophianopoulos, EPA- Region 4, (404) 562-8604, or 1-(800) 241-1754 and leave a message. The SRS contact for additional information is Jim Moore at 800-249-8155 or at jim02.moore@srs.gov.

Please Join Us Citizens Advisory Board Meetings

April 22-23, 2002
Desoto Hilton
Savannah, GA

May 21, 2002
North Augusta Community Center
North Augusta, SC

Current NEPA actions affecting SRS

- *Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain (DOE/EIS-0250)*

This environmental impact statement (EIS) assesses the potential environmental impacts from construction, operation, and closure of a Nuclear Regulatory Commission-licensed geologic repository for disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high-level waste. The draft EIS was released August 1999. A Supplemental EIS was distributed in May 2001 to address a new engineering design. The final EIS was issued in February 2002. It is available at www.ymmp.gov. The Record of Decision date is uncertain.

- *SRS High Level Waste Tank (HLW) Closure (DOE/EIS-0303)*

The proposed action is to close the SRS HLW Tanks in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, DOE Orders and South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control permit requirements. The draft EIS was released in November 2000. Public meetings were held in January 2001. The final EIS is expected in 2002.

- *Disposition of Metals That May Contain Residual Radioactivity (DOE/EIS-0327)*

This programmatic EIS will evaluate alternatives for disposition of scrap metals from DOE sites that may have been in radiological areas. The disposition options to be analyzed include continuation of the suspension on unrestricted release of metals for recycling, unrestricted release of scrap metals for recycling, and disposal. The Notice of Intent for this programmatic EIS was issued on July 12. Public meetings were held on July 31, 2001, in North Augusta, SC. The schedule is uncertain.

- *Removal, Transportation and Storage of Radioisotopic Thermoelectric Generators (RTG) (DOE/EA-1351)*

This programmatic environmental assessment (PEA) is being developed jointly by DOE and the U. S. Air Force. It addresses: (1) the removal and transportation of 10 Strontium-90 RTGs from Burnt Mountain Seismic Array Laboratory in Alaska to a DOE site or an Air Force facility; and (2) long-term storage of the 10 identified plus about 50 other RTGs. The draft PEA is expected to be available the second quarter of 2002. The DOE decision to either issue

a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) or notice of intent to prepare an EIS is projected for third quarter of 2002.

- *Storage, Transportation, and Disposition of Potentially Reusable Uranium Materials (DOE/EA-1393)*

DOE-Oak Ridge is preparing a PEA to implement a comprehensive management program to safely, efficiently, and effectively store its potentially reusable low enriched uranium, normal uranium, and depleted uranium. The comprehensive management program addressed in this PEA looks at transportation, including preparation of uranium materials for safe shipment, long-term storage, and maintenance. Distribution of the draft PEA is expected to be available the second quarter of 2002. The DOE-OR decision to either issue a FONSI or notice of intent to prepare an EIS is projected for third quarter of 2002.

- *Closure of R-Reactor Disassembly Basin at the SRS (DOE/EE/CA-0001)*

An Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis proposes a non-time critical removal action to address the interim threats of release and the potential threats to worker safety and health. Closure of the R-Reactor disassembly basin will be evaluated through the EE/CA process. DOE-SR plans to release the draft EE/CA for a 30-day public comment period. Following that, a memorandum documenting the decision on the selection of the closure alternative would be prepared and transmitted to the public by DOE-SR. The draft EE/CA going to EPA is scheduled for the second quarter of 2002.

- *Remediation of the TNX-Area Operable Unit at SRS (DOE/VIA-0002)*

The NEPA Values Impact Assessment (VIA) accompanies the CERCLA review of alternatives for remediation of the TNX Operable Unit (OU) at SRS. The proposed CERCLA action is to identify preferred remedial alternatives for addressing the TNX-Area OU and to provide an opportunity for public input into the remedy selection process. A draft VIA is currently being prepared. DOE-SR plans to issue the final TNX VIA and the Statement of Basis/Proposed Plan in the second quarter of 2002. (*see related article on page 2*).

Public Welcomed at Citizens Advisory Board Meetings

The SRS Citizens Advisory Board (CAB), a non-partisan independent group of citizens, provides informed and timely recommendations to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the Environmental Protection Agency - Region IV (EPA) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) concerning decisions that affect SRS in areas of environmental restoration, waste management and activities related to these functions. One goal of the CAB is to ensure that stakeholders are given an opportunity to become involved in the decision-making processes of DOE, EPA, SCDHEC, and SRS management. Participation by the public is welcomed and encouraged. For meeting information, contact Jim Moore at 800-249-8155 or at jim02.moore@srs.gov.